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Recommended Citation

"Professional Competence, Moral Integrity: Experts to Examine Ethics and the Professions" (2000). *News Releases*. 9322.
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7JA(2) c.1



Sept. 28, 2000
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NEWS RELEASE

PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE, MORAL INTEGRITY: EXPERTS TO EXAMINE ETHICS AND THE PROFESSIONS

DAYTON, Ohio — The modern world is full of tensions — balancing responsibilities at work and to family, fulfilling community service inclinations, carving out time for personal growth, celebrating your faith, not to mention sitting down to a nice meal with friends and catching your breath every once in a while.

And it's only going to get worse.

The ethics of modern life, or how to live a full and rewarding professional and personal life, will be addressed in a yearlong series of seminars called "Ethics and the Professions," a sesquicentennial event at the University of Dayton. Guest speakers will focus on four specific professions — business, education, law and engineering — and a two-day colloquium will bring together academic experts to explore how ethics and professions are entwined.

All sessions are free and open to the public.

"We're going to be examining ethical decisions that professionals face in their daily lives. We want to ask how professionals can develop moral integrity as well as professional competence," said Patricia A. Johnson, professor of philosophy and an organizer of the series. "The University is concerned with developing students who are going to be responsible social leaders in their communities. So we need to address these issues as professionals, and our students will need to address these issues as they move out into their professional fields."

More than 70 faculty members will be meeting throughout the year to explore the specific professions.

"Any serious prolonged discussion of ethics is rooted in a longer conversation of what it means to be a professional, or to put it more philosophically, what it means to be a human being capable of competent service of others," said the Rev. James L. Heft, S.M., chancellor and University professor of faith and culture. "Over the last decades, a lot of societies have professionalized, with criteria and credentials, and we all need to reflect on these issues. Here at UD we can also raise and explore the issue of the the relationship that can and should exist between a religious vision of the person and of community and the responsibility of a professional."

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The original professions — established in medieval times — were law, medicine and divinity. "Service was a key requirement, and the acquisition of a certain knowledge base was central," Heft said. "Ethics is deeper. Ethics concerns a code of behavior that would be expected of anyone who practices that profession."

The Ethics and Professions series will feature four guest speakers.

- Kenneth E. Goodpaster, professor and Koch endowed chair in business ethics at the University of St. Thomas, will speak at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 25, in the Matt Heck Courtroom in Keller Hall, home of the UD School of Law. He will address "Business Ethics: From Classroom to Corporation."

- Parker J. Palmer, a writer, teacher and activist who works independently on issues in education, community leadership, spirituality and social change, will speak at 4:30 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 28, in the Kennedy Union ballroom. He will address "The Recovery of Community in Higher Education: On Knowing, Teaching and Learning."

- Michael J. Perry, distinguished chair in law at Wake Forest University, will speak at 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 8, in the Matt Heck Courtroom in Keller Hall, home of the UD School of Law. He will present "Catholic Legal Education, Moral Controversy and the Magisterium: Reflections on the Responsibilities of Catholic Law Schools."

- Braden Allenby, vice president of environmental health and safety at AT&T and adjunct professor of international and public affairs at Columbia University, will speak at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, March 29, in the Sears Recital Hall of the Jesse Philips Humanities Center. He will address "Earth Engineering."

The series will culminate in the 28th annual Richard R. Baker Philosophy Colloquium, "Ethics and the Professions," to be held April 20 and 21, 2000, on campus. Academic experts will explore questions such as: What are the obligations of professionals to clients, employers, the public and the profession? Do individuals and organizations have a professional responsibility to make services available to those in need? Does a professional have the obligation to serve the public good? What is the role of ethical theory in professional education?

Guest speakers at the symposium will be Jean Bethke Elshtain, the Laura Spelman Rockefeller professor of social and political ethics at the University of Chicago, who will address "Whatever Happened to Formation," and Larry May, professor of philosophy at Washington University in St. Louis, who will address "The Changing Face of Professional Ethics: Serving Client and Community."

The series is part of the University's celebration of its sesquicentennial. Founded in 1850 by the Society of Mary, UD has become a national leader in Catholic higher education, graduating students who are prepared to succeed professionally and who know the value of service and leadership to community. The celebration, which will run through May 2001, includes song and dance, religion and humor, and events that range from film to philosophy.